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Candidates endorsed who support principles of unique program

More candidates are now openly supporting the Manitoba Real Estate Association's Quality of Life program than during the last federal election campaign.

"I'm encouraged by the response," said Lorne Weiss, chair of MREA's political action committee.

"From 20 to 25 per cent of the candidates have taken the time to confirm their support for the Quality of Life program.

"It's difficult to believe that anyone would not support a statement that is basically in favour of creating better communities for all Manitobans, Canadians for that matter," he added.

MREA had sent letters out to all the Manitoba candidates running in the January 23 federal election. The

letters asked for their signatures on a form confirming that they support the five principles of the Quality of Life program: ensure economic vitality, provide housing opportunities, preserve the environment, protect property owners and build better communities.

"We send elected representatives to Ottawa with the concept of building better communities in mind," said Weiss. "It's important to note which people representing constituents are not prepared to make that kind of statement."

The MREA was the first provincial association to adopt the Quality of Life program, which is based on a program started by REALTORS in Washington state.

In Washington, politicians who sign a pledge to support the Quality of Life program are judged after they enter office on how well they follow each principle.

Since MREA started the program a couple of years ago, other REALTOR associations and boards in Canada have also adopted the Quality of Life message.

"We're proud that we're the first association in Canada to have taken the step to endorse candidates based on their pledge to the Quality of Life program," said Weiss.

Weiss said the MREA's Quality of Life program has raised the profile of Manitoba REALTORS.

"We're starting to make politicians and Manitobans aware of the proactive

role REALTORS have in their communities," Weiss said. "Because of our increased profile, it's more important to candidates to provide their endorsement on that basis."

Weiss said the idea behind the Quality of Life candidate endorsements is not to take part in partisan or party politics. "The Quality of Life principles transcend partisan politics."

Candidates who sign on to the five principles are all endorsed regardless of what party they represent.

Weiss said the program also acts as a blueprint for how Manitoba REALTORS approach issues.

"Quality of Life is a benchmark that we use to judge our initiatives," he explained. "We judge the positive or

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